

REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, 1, 2, 4, 10, 11, 14, 15, 23, 25- 27 and 29 are amended. Claims 17-21 have been withdrawn from consideration. No new matter is added.

The courtesies extended to Applicants' representative by Examiner Knable during the telephone interview held March 20, 2009 are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below, which constitute Applicants' record of the interview.

Claims 1-16 and 22-30 continue to read on the elected species and claim 1 is generic to non-elected claims 17-21. Rejoinder of claims 17-21 is requested when claim 1 is found allowable.

Claims 1-16 and 22-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Regarding claim 1, the Office Action alleges that "thereby expanded or contracted" and "sheets" of rigid support members are both indefinite. As agreed during the telephone interview, "thereby" and "sheets of" have been deleted from claim 1.

Claim 4 calls for means for varying an axial position of the bead lock means relative to an axial side portion of said center bladder. The Office Action alleges that this is contradicted by the disclosure in paragraph [0093] of Applicants' specification. Applicants respectfully assert that support for claim 4 can be found in paragraph [0014]. Thus, one of ordinary skill in the art would understand that claim 4 is not contradicted by paragraph [0093].

Claim 4 was also rejected for using "that" bead lock. As agreed during the telephone interview, claim 4 has been amended to call for "the" bead lock.

Claim 4 was also rejected for lacking antecedent basis for "said center bladder."

Applicants respectfully assert that the amendment to claim 1 obviates the rejection.

Claim 10 was rejected for lacking antecedent basis for "said screw blocks." Claim 10 has been amended to depend from claim 9.

Claims 10, 11, 14 and 15 were rejected for being unclear for using the phrase "by circumferential convex and concave." Claims 10, 11, 14 and 15 have been amended to call for "by circumferential convex and concave portions."

Claim 25 was rejected for lacking antecedent basis for "the bead cores" and "the carcass band side portions." Claim 25 has been amended responsive to the rejection.

Claim 26 was rejected for calling for displacing "to" an axial center when the bead locks do not actually reach the center. As agreed during the telephone interview, "to" has been replaced with "towards."

Claim 27 was rejected for lacking antecedent basis for "said folding back rollers." Claim 27 has been amended to provide antecedent basis.

Claim 29 was rejected for lacking antecedent basis for "said center bladder." Claim 29 was also rejected because it is allegedly not clear how the pressure can be reduced as the bladder is pressurized. Claim 1 has been amended to provide antecedent basis for said center bladder. Further, claim 29 has been amended for clarity, as discussed during the telephone interview.

Claim 30 was rejected for lacking antecedent basis for "the center bladder." Claim 1 has been amended, obviating the rejection.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Mallory, U.S. Patent No. 4,007,081. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites "the center bladder is expandable or contractible independently of the movement of the rigid support members." As agreed during the telephone interview, the only way in which Mallory's elastic drum sleeve 216 (alleged center bladder) can be expanded or contracted is through the use of Mallory's drum 45 (alleged rigid support member in the rejection of claim 2).

Claims 2-4 are patentable by reason of their dependency from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 5-7, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Mallory in view of Gazuit (Gazuit 1), DE 2124978, and Gutknecht et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,318,434. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Mallory fails to teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 1. Further, Gazuit and Gutknecht fail to overcome the deficiencies of Mallory. Thus, claims 5-7, 23 and 24 are patentable by reason of their dependency from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 8-16, 25, 26, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Mallory in view of Gazuit (Gazuit 2), U.S. Patent No. 3,767,509, or Gazuit (Gazuit 3), GB 1524369. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Mallory fails to teach or suggest all of the features of independent claim 1. Further, neither Gazuit 1 nor Gazuit 2, alone or in combination, overcome the deficiencies of Mallory. Thus, claims 18-16, 25, 26, 29 and 30 are patentable by reason of their dependency from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 22 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Mallory in view of Frazier et al., U.S. Patent No. 3,684,621 and Irie, U.S. Patent No. 4,468,267. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Mallory fails to teach or suggest all of the features of claim 1. Further, Frazier and Irie fail to overcome the deficiencies of Mallory. Thus, claim 22 is patentable by reason of its dependency from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features it recites.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 28 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Mallory in view of Gazuit 2 or Gazuit 3 and Stevens, U.S. Patent No. 2,605,197. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Mallory fails to teach or suggest all of the features of claim 1. Further, Gazuit 2, Gazuit 3 and Stevens fail to overcome the deficiencies of Mallory. Therefore, claim 28 is patentable by reason of its dependency from independent claim 1, as well as for the additional features it recites.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the application are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Registration No. 27,075

Steven D. Jinks
Registration No. 62,760

JAO:SDJ/mkg

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 320850
Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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